

CSS Workforce NY Board of Directors Meeting Minutes



Date: June 26th, 2025

Time: 8:00 AM

Location: Southern Tier Library System (STLS) 9424 Scott Road, Painted Post

Facilitator and Chairperson: Jack Wheeler

Attendance: **Steuben County** - Jack Wheeler, Jamie Johnson, Colleen Hurd, Mike Nisbet, Tyre Bush, Angela Russo, Bill Caudill **Chemung County** – Joe Roman, Andrew Tunison, Josh Michal, Kip Cerasaro, Jeremy Ackerman **Schuyler County** - Judy McKinney-Cherry, Liz Stamp, Bruce Boughton, Salvatore Garozzo

AD-Hoc – Christian Harris

Staff & Guests: Chris Sharman, Mel Johnson, Patti Redder, Ray Naylor, Kelly Baney and Victoria Ehlen

Absent: Charlie Commisso, Mike Mishook, Kelly Long, Heather LaBarr, Angela Hawken, Ernie Hartman, Brian McCarthy, Drew Farren

Vacancies: (1) Steuben County

Note-taker: Mel Johnson

Call to Order

- 8:01 am Meeting called to order by Jack Wheeler

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

- Members were reminded of the organizational conflict of interest policy. Members with conflict were asked to recuse themselves from relevant votes.

Meeting Approval (April 24th, 2025)

Approval of previous Board Meeting Minutes (Minutes included in the meeting packet)

- Discussion: None

Motion to approve April 24th, 2025, Meeting Minutes:

First: Joe Roman

Second: Judy McKinney-Cherry Approved unanimously

Executive Committee Report (June 5th, 2025)

Approval of previous Executive Committee Meeting Minutes (Minutes included in the meeting packet)

- Discussion: None

Motion to approve June 5th, 2025, Meeting Minutes:

First: Bruce Boughton

Second: Angela Russo

Approved unanimously

Budget Report (Budget included in the meeting packet)

PY24 Budget - At 92% of the way through the fiscal year. The fiscal year ends on June 30th. The overall obligations stand at 69%.

- **Total Personnel Costs** are 77% spent and obligated.
- **Total Operating Expenditures** are spent 65% and obligated.
- **Total One-Stop Costs** are 66% spent and obligated.

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- **Total Program Expenditures** are 61% spent and 66% obligated. The *Emerging Workforce* work experience is currently 67% spent. There was discussion around achieving year-end goals despite current timing challenges.

The organization is currently projected to fall short of meeting the 80% spending requirement, particularly in the Youth programs.

Motion to approve PY24 - May 2025 budget as presented:

First: Judy McKinney-Cherry

Second: Bruce Boughton

Approved unanimously

Department of Labor Waiver - Chris discussed the opportunity to apply for a Department of Labor (DOL) waiver that would allow the carryover of unspent funds into the next program year. He noted that underspending in the youth funding category could serve as a potential justification. The waiver application is due in July.

Motion to approve submission of the DOL waiver request:

First: Bill Caudill

Second: Sal Garozzo

Approved unanimously

Draft PY25 Budget Presentation (Draft Budget included in the meeting packet)

Chris presented the draft PY25 Budget for the upcoming program year, highlighting a 12% reduction in WIOA funding. The proposed budget includes the following allocations:

- **Total Personnel:** \$678,071.00
- **Total Operating Expenditures:** \$161,250.00
- **Total One-Stop Costs:** \$130,000.00
- **Total Program Expenditures:** \$1,239,174.00
- **Total PY25 Budget Expenditures:** \$2,208,494.06

Chris noted that this is a preliminary budget and that funding levels may be adjusted throughout the program year.

The WIOA funding is down 12% for our agency vs PY24. The decrease is expected to be partially offset by fiscal and program incentives, as well as county training funds. The organization has received a fiscal incentive of \$250,000.00. These funds are designated specifically for training initiatives, including customized training and on-the-job training programs.

Chris mentioned to the board that the agency plans to hire a Fiscal Assistant and a Quality Assurance staff member to enhance financial accounting and quality assurance functions across departments. Jack expressed his support for this initiative, emphasizing the benefits of providing additional support to Patti and Mel, as well as the importance of facilitating knowledge transfer within the team. The PY25 budget can accommodate this new position.

Motion to approve PY25 "Draft" budget as presented:

First: Joe Roman

Second: Bill Caudill

Approved unanimously

PY25 Staff Increases (Effective January 2026) – While there is a decrease in funding there are still funds available for staff increases. This would remain competitive with market rates and retain qualified personnel.

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Motion to approve 4% staff increases effective January 2026 as presented:

First: Bruce Boughton

Second: Angela Russo

(2) Abstentions - Jamie

Johnson and Judy McKinney-Cherry

Jack thanked the team for their hard work and confirms the adoption of the budget and wage increase.

Operations & Oversight Committee Report (June 4th 2025) (Minutes provided in the meeting packet)

- Discussion:
 - Judy highlighted the minutes from the meeting, focusing on setting specific parameters for work experience and success rates.
 - Youth spending remains a top concern and was the focus of recent discussions.
 - TTAP - There were extensive discussions around the effectiveness of TTAP, noting that it seems like the same events are being attended repeatedly without clear outcomes.
 - The committee noted that since TTAP is funded through an ARC grant and includes federal dollars, there is a need for more thorough and consistent reporting to ensure accountability and transparency.
 - Safety Concerns - Judy also discussed the safety concerns at the Elmira Center. She plans to discuss these issues at the CCC Board of Trustees meeting to address potential security challenges faced by staff at the center. Chris also noted that a safety committee has been formed again with representatives from various agencies to improve communication and develop strategies for addressing these concerns. This group meets monthly.

Motion to approve June 4th 2025, Meeting Minutes:

First: Bill Caudill

Second: Mike Nisbet

Approved unanimously.

ITA Report (From July 1, 2024) (report included in the meeting packet)

- Tuition approvals have increased from \$181,886. last year to \$336,130. this year.
- 83 ITA's were approved in PY24.
- CDL training is currently the most popular training field.
- Request from board members to make the charts bigger to be able to read all the training types.

Operations and Workshops – (Presented by: Kelly Baney) (Report and Monthly Events/Workshop Calendar included in the meeting packet)

Comparison of May PY24 vs. May PY23

In May of Program Year (PY) 2024, a total of 493 services were delivered, broken down as follows:

- 263 to dislocated workers
- 68 to adults
- 162 were self-service

In comparison, May of PY 2023 saw 587 services provided:

- 319 to dislocated workers
- 149 to adults

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- 119 were self-service

The year-over-year decrease in service delivery is likely attributed to fewer individuals receiving unemployment benefits and a reduction in available training services.

Training and Employment Services – May PY24

During May of Program Year 2024, Career Center Counselors and partner staff delivered a total of 226 services. Of these:

- 61 were training-related services, including On-the-Job Training, Customized Training, Initial Assessments, Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), and Individual Employment Plans.
- 165 services focused on career support and access, consisting of Career Guidance, Job Referrals, and Self-Service activities.
- Approximately 87% of customers who have participated in Customized Trainings and On-the-Job Trainings reside in Chemung, Steuben, and Schuyler counties.

County-Based Service Delivery – May PY24

In May of Program Year 2024, services were provided to unique individuals categorized by their county of residence. These services extended beyond just training-related activities and encompassed a range of support offerings. Notably, several Allegany County residents accessed services through the Hornell Career Center.

Career Center Operations Update

All Career Centers are currently operating on their regular schedules with no service limitations. Each center closes daily from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM for lunch.

Observed closures:

- Thursday, June 19th: All centers were closed in observance of Juneteenth.
- Monday, June 10th: The Bath Career Center was closed due to severe weather and a power outage.
- Thursday, July 4th: All centers will be closed for Independence Day.

Workshop Offerings & Attendance

A wide range of in-person and virtual workshops continue to be offered by the PTE program and WorkPlace career counselors. The CSS Workforce System distributes a comprehensive monthly calendar highlighting all available sessions.

Attendance is actively monitored, and future workshop topics will be developed in response to customer feedback and evolving needs.

- On June 17th, the Department of Civil Service and the NYS Police presented a workshop in Elmira. Additional Civil Service workshops are scheduled for Bath and Hornell on July 28th.

Partner Coordination and Staff Training Updates

The site management teams from all three counties continue to convene on the first Wednesday of each month. These meetings serve as a platform to discuss ongoing changes, suggest system improvements, and share important updates beneficial to all partners.

Recent Trainings and Events:

- On June 10th, Law NY and Cornell University's Criminal Justice Employment Initiative Team hosted a partner staff workshop. This session was offered as a second opportunity for staff who were unable to attend the original April training.

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- A two-part workshop on leveraging AI to support jobseekers was delivered by The WorkPlace on May 22nd and May 29th.

Safety Initiatives:

- Safety Committee meetings for the Elmira CCC building have resumed and will be held regularly on the third Monday of each month.
- Upcoming training courses for all building staff include de-escalation strategies led by CCC and active shooter response instruction in coordination with the Elmira Police Department.

Community Engagement Activities

The System Manager participated in two key regional events:

- Southern Tier Business Expo – May 8th
- Siemens Building Technologies Recruitment – May 28th

Additionally, WorkPlace staff attended the Housing, Health, and Safety Event held in Bath on June 18th, further strengthening community outreach and collaboration efforts

Staff Training and Personnel Updates

On May 20th WorkPlace staff participated in a travel training workshop led by The Institute for Human Services, which offered a comprehensive overview of public transportation options in Steuben County.

Additional professional development workshops hosted by The WorkPlace were held on:

- May 13th – Utilizing labor market information
- June 24th – Building career pathways

The System Manager is currently enrolled in a 12-week management training program designed for all WorkPlace managers.

We're also pleased to welcome Domenick Austin, who joined The WorkPlace as a Career Counselor in Elmira on June 2nd.

Director's Report

Business Services (Report included in meeting packet) PY24 covers the period from July 1, 2024, through June 2025.

- **Total Contract Training Dollars:**
 - Total Dollar Value OJT Contracts Written - \$301,051.25
 - Total Dollar Value – CT Contracts Written – \$43,987.62
 - Total Dollar Value – All Contracts - \$345,038.87
- **Break Out by Contract Dollars:**
 - Chemung County – (49%) \$167,475.64
 - Steuben County – (49%) \$160,181.23
 - Schuyler County – (.02%) \$7,382.00

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- **Job Fairs and Recruitment Events:**

- May 28th 2025 – A custom recruitment was held for Siemens Technology at the Corning Library. Not related to Siemens mobility. There were 7 job seekers in attendance. We used the opportunity to also promote our Youth and Adult/DW programs.

Motion to approve the Business Service Report as presented:

First: Judy McKinney-Cherry

Second: Angela Russo (1) Abstention – Sal Garozzo

Local Plan: (Executive Summary included in meeting packet)

The Local Plan is updated every four years. The draft version for Program Years 2025–2029 was posted on the CSS Workforce NY website for public comment over a two-week period. Additionally, the plan was shared via email with all board members for review and feedback.

- Jamie recommended revising the plan’s terminology from “Rail Car” to “Transit Manufacturing.”
- Sal suggested including “Continued Education” initiatives for the healthcare sector.

A motion was made to submit the Local Plan following incorporation of the recommended revisions.

First: Jamie Johnson

Second: Mike Nisbet

Approved unanimously.

Other Business -

Achieve Competition Overview and Project Call (Judy McKinney-Cherry)

A new \$50 million initiative called *Achieve* has been launched as a competitive opportunity for regions to propose transformational projects. Unlike traditional State Economic Development funding, which typically supports capital infrastructure (“bricks and mortar”), *Achieve* introduces a fresh structure:

- \$15 million of the funding is allocated to capital improvements
- \$20 million is dedicated to operational support—marking the first time such funding has been made available

This shift enables proposals that go beyond physical construction to include programmatic and strategic operations—offering seed funding to launch sustainable regional initiatives. The goal is to surface projects with long-term, transformational impact across entire regions.

In presentations to regional co-chairs, officials emphasized the importance of ensuring that every county feels represented and benefits from proposed efforts. Given the area's diversity, this may prove challenging, but promising ideas have emerged that could positively affect seven or even all eight counties.

A call for projects is forthcoming. The aim is not to solicit full-scale proposals or white papers but instead to gather concise concept summaries — brief paragraphs outlining transformational ideas.

Strategic Focus Areas:

The regional council has prioritized two pillars from its five-pillar strategic framework:

- **Livability**
- **Backbone Industries & Innovation** (with Clean Energy initiatives being categorized here)

AI Integration in Workforce Development

A suggestion was made to explore the integration of artificial intelligence within the workforce development strategy. Given AI’s growing impact across various industries, particularly in driving efficiency and innovation — it was recommended that the program begin evaluating how AI could be incorporated to

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benefit both operations and the community. Participants were encouraged to consider the potential opportunities AI might offer in shaping future initiatives.

The board emphasized the importance of reliable high-speed internet access to successfully support AI integration within the workforce development strategy. Ensuring adequate connectivity was noted as a foundational requirement for any future digital or AI-driven initiatives.

Adjournment 8:57 am

Motion to adjourn the meeting:

First: Jamie Jonson

Second: Judy McKinney-Cherry

Approved unanimously

Minutes prepared and submitted by: Mel Johnson

Next Meeting Date: August 28th, 2025, at 8:00 AM

Location: Southern Tier Library System (STLS) 9424 Scott Road, Painted Post